

External Stakeholder Meeting Input
October 2, 2002
Puerto Rico

- Don't see relationship between federal partners and local programs - Federal agencies should provide local programs with a direct liaison/avenue to express concerns and receive technical assistance.
- Training is needed at the local, regional, and community levels. That way the local individuals will build capacity in their home area. (The focus of the training should be on agencies, community colleges, etc. then it should be taken out to the constituents. That way, you get better buy in.)
- Implement a "cultural exchange" program to increase communication between local partners and federal agencies - maybe bring local staff or other local parties to D.C. for training.
 - There are some cautions with this idea though because there is a high turn over of staff so an exchange might not actually succeed in building on-the ground capacity
 - The work needs to be done at the level of hands on day-to-day issues
 - There is a question of who should be sent? At what level? Staff tends to be so thin that sending one person to DC leaves pretty much a skeleton crew.
- As we develop our NOAA strategic plan, we should be developing a parallel human capital strategic plan, including career development strategies and options.
- One of the topics is to create an ocean-savvy public. That requires conducting good science and then having that science translated into lay-language and also incorporating implementation mechanisms at the local level.
- Under the topic of Promote Healthy Resources: we need to look at the socioeconomic impacts/analysis as well as the cultural aspects.
- They don't see tourism and the promotion of non-fishing activities as "Uses".
- In the "house" diagram - where does financial management, administration, and leadership fit?
- The All Islands group faces the challenge of the vacancy in the OCRM director's position in D.C. (2+ years now). It sends a poor signal and should be filled if possible.
- The human capacity element is critical and capacity must be built at the grassroots level. Once the new strategic plan and reorganization of NOAA are in place - how do the requirements affect the All Islands group which constantly operates below capacity? Folks in the All Islands group are forced to split their focus and not do their "day job" as well as they otherwise could.
- There is a constant need to build local expertise, expand awareness, and to provide training, continuity, and sustainability of that expertise.
- NOAA must be adaptable to local realities and needs, and should perhaps consider the FWS training model.